

Oil firms asked to make unbranded diesel available

The petroleum and natural gas ministry Wednesday asked oil marketing companies to make unbranded diesel available at all their retail outlets across the country, fulfilling one of the demands of the striking transporters.

The transporters, who began their strike Wednesday morning, have said they had been forced to buy premium diesel at higher and unregulated prices. They demanded the availability of cheaper unbranded fuel.

'We have sent a direction to Indian Oil, Bharat Petroleum and Hindustan Petroleum to make unbranded diesel available in adequate quantities. We hope the situation will improve by evening,' said a ministry official.

Unbranded diesel, which is cheaper by Rs.2.20 a litre, was not available in some parts of the country as the fuel from Taiwan did not reach India in time. 'The fuel has reached the country and would ease the situation by evening in those parts,' explained the official.

The truckers are on an indefinite strike also demanding abolition of toll tax and exemption from service tax, apart from availability of normal diesel as well as rationalisation of duty on the fuel.

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